



# Library COLUMNS

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Lee Smith's speaking voice is unmistakable. Some time ago I tuned in to CBS Sunday Morning and knew immediately, without looking, that I was hearing Lee Smith—and I had only heard her speak twice before. As you would expect, she has a Southern accent, but why is it so memorable? Again as you might expect, most of her themes and characters are Southern; when she read from her novel The Devil's Dream at the UNCG Alumni House, the audience roared with laughter as she described her attempt to explain the term "double wide" to her New York editor.

So her literary voice is no less Southern—and no less memorable—than her speaking voice. Whether she is writing in the voice of a child or an old woman, an evangelical Christian or a stripper, the words and the tone ring true. In her most recent short story collection, News of the Spirit, she speaks in all these voices and more, with never a missed beat or an uncertain note. In fact, in all of her writing, it is her characters' voices, not their settings or their actions, that have remained with me. Surely it's no accident that one of her most praised novels is called Oral History.

If you haven't read Lee Smith, start with the stories. (Her other collections are Cakewalk and Me and My Baby View the Eclipse; the title alone of the last one made me love it.) Then move on to novels like Family Linen and Saving Grace. Then come to hear her speak at the Friends of the Library meeting. I promise, you won't forget any of her voices.

—Gaylor Callahan,  
Interlibrary Loan Department

## Lee Smith to Speak at Friends of the Library Annual Dinner

Novelist Lee Smith has been confirmed as the featured speaker at the Friends of the Library annual dinner on March 22, 2000 in Cone Ballroom. Smith has won a number of awards, including the Lila Wallace Readers Digest Award, the Robert Penn Warren Prize for Fiction, and an Academy Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. She recently retired from the faculty at N.C. State.



Lee Smith

Smith's work and that of her fellow alumnae of Hollins College was recently explored in Nancy C. Parrish's book, Lee Smith, Annie Dillard, and the Hollins Group : a Genesis of Writers, published by LSU Press in 1998.

Lee Smith's work has been well-received by a variety of critics. Jonathan Yardley of the *Washington Post Book World* calls her "a writer whose growth has been steady and sure." *Village Voice* reviewer David Bradley calls her "a master craftsman." Victoria Jenkins of the *Chicago Tribune Books* concludes in a review of Smith's book The Devil's Dream, "she writes with wit and clarity, never with condescension, and her careful, attentive prose lends dignity to the lives of her subjects."

### Selected Publications:

- The Last Day the Dogbushes Bloomed*, Harper, 1968.
- Something in the Wind*, Harper, 1971.
- Fancy Strut*, Harper, 1973.
- Black Mountain Breakdown*, Putnam, 1980.
- Cakewalk*, Putnam, 1981. (stories)
- Oral History*, Putnam, 1983.
- Family Linen*, Putnam, 1985.
- Fair and Tender Ladies*, Putnam, 1988.
- Me and My Baby View the Eclipse*, Putnam, 1990. (stories)
- The Devil's Dream*, Putnam, 1992.
- Saving Grace*, Putnam, 1995.
- The Christmas Letters*, Algonquin Books, 1996.
- News of the Spirit*, Putnam, 1997.

The social hour will begin at 6:15 p.m. in Cone Ballroom of Elliott University Center, with dinner to follow at 7:15. Reservations may be made through March 15 with the Administrative Offices of Jackson Library. Call 334-5880 for details.

# Jackson Library News

The Jackson Library Staff Association thanks all who contributed to the Association's drive to raise money to purchase books for the Patillo Elementary School in Tarboro, which was devastated by Hurricane Floyd. The drive raised over \$2000, which was presented to the School by members of the staff association on February 3. A publisher has agreed to donate one book for every book purchased, thereby rebuilding the school's media center twice as quickly. Several members of the library staff are also planning to continue to help Patillo Elementary School by cataloging the new books once they are received.

Since last September, Jackson Library has partnered with Wiley Elementary School in Greensboro to help children at the school improve their literacy skills. Each week, eleven volunteers go to Wiley to work with children one on one to help them with their spelling words, practice reading, and work on writing compositions. The volunteers include **Mary Katherine Amos, Sue Brusnahan, Gaylor Callahan, Mary Jane Conger, Sarah Dorsey, Modgie Jeffers, Lu Lietz, Cora Mathewson, Barry Miller, Dana Sally and Tammy Williams.**

Jackson Library and the Division of Continual Learning are pleased to announce the availability of a selective bibliography on distance education intended for the use of faculty at UNCG. The bibliography, tailored specifically to the needs and concerns of UNCG faculty, may be found on the worldwide web at <http://library.uncg.edu/de/>

The bibliography contains almost 300 current references arranged by subject area and is updated monthly. Each entry contains links to the full text of the article if it is available electronically or notes its location in the Jackson Library collection.

Acquisition Librarian **Rick Anderson** presented "Discounts in Our Pockets, Bullet Holes in Our Feet: Why Vendor Consolidation Is Our Fault" as part of a panel at the ALA Midwinter Conference in January.

**Terry Brandsma**, Information Technology Librarian, has been selected to speak at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Computers in Libraries Conference in Washington, DC. He will present "E-Reserves Made Easy" as part of the E-Resources Track on Wednesday, March 15. The Computers in Libraries Conference is the most comprehensive North American conference and exhibition dealing with all aspects of library technology.

Terry has also been elected to the position of Vice Chair/Chair-Elect of the North Carolina Library Association Technology and Trends Roundtable. Its purpose is to unite those NCLA members interested in the advances and uses of technology and to provide an opportunity for discussion and activity.

**Rebecca Brown** has joined the Circulation staff as a Library Assistant. Rebecca comes to Greensboro from Wilmington where she was employed in the private sector. She is also pursuing her degree in Library Science, having worked in a variety of library positions at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Networked Information Services Librarian **John Felts** has created and is administering a new listserv as a solutions-based forum for providing library resources and services to the distance education community: NCLIBS4DIST-L. He will present "Now You Can Get There from Here: Creating an Interactive Web Application for Accessing Full-Text Journal Articles from Any Location" at the Off-Campus Libraries Services conference in Portland, Oregon in April. John also published a review, "The Red Hot Archive: A History of Jazz Before 1930" in *Electronic Resources Review*; 03:9 1999; pp. 117-118.

**Bob Gaines**, Head of Government Documents, and Special Projects Librarian **Barry Miller** conducted a workshop entitled "Making Your CyberVoice Heard" in collaboration with the Greensboro Area Chamber of Commerce in January. The workshop dealt with ways of tracking and responding to proposed local, state and federal regulations.

Assistant Reference Librarian **Gerald Holmes** is the incoming chair of the North Carolina Library Association's Scholarship Committee for the 1999-2001 biennium. He continues to be very active in NCLA's Round Table on Ethnic Minority Concerns, encouraging students to consider careers in librarianship. He has worked to place information about library conferences, scholarship opportunities and continuing education in Career Services offices throughout North Carolina. Gerald has also been active in raising funds for the Spectrum Initiative Scholarship program of the American Library Association, which is designed to recruit minority professionals to the field of librarianship.

Circulation Department Head **Robert James** made two presentations at the ALA Midwinter Conference in January. One program dealt with "Preservation Tri-

age in the Stacks.” Robert’s second presentation, part of a panel discussion, offered a state organization’s view of its relationship with larger regional preservation consortia. Robert is President of the North Carolina Preservation Consortium. He was also appointed to the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the North Carolina Library Association in November.

**Glenda Kale** assumed her new duties as the Administrative Assistant in the Administrative Office in January. Previously Glenda had been the Office Manager for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools for two years. She also worked in the Guilford County School District and the Durham Public Schools in administrative assistant positions.

**Robin Reed** has joined the Jackson Library staff as the Processing Assistant in the Administrative Office. Robin comes to us from West Virginia University in Morgantown where she was a secretary with the Division of Plant and Soil Science.

**April Wreath, Systems Librarian, and Terry W. Brandsma**, Information Technology Librarian, have been selected to speak on the development of our E-Reserve system at the National DRA Users Conference, St. Louis, MO, in March. Planning considerations and configuration details will be shared with DRA users from around the world.

The Friends of the Library and the UNCG Bookstore are continuing a series of receptions to honor book authors from the UNCG faculty. The reception to honor History Department faculty members who have published books in the past three years will be held on Wednesday, February 23 at 4:00 p.m. in the Special Collections Division on the second floor of Jackson Library.

Jackson Library thanks all faculty members who have completed the recent Faculty Survey. Those who have not responded are asked to do so as soon as possible. The survey results are expected to be an important part of our efforts to continually improve our programs and services.

## Why Do Women Love Little Women?



Jo March doll

Last year, Jackson Library celebrated Women’s History Month with a celebration of Great Books by Great Women. During that celebration, we produced a list of fifty great books by great women as selected by a committee of the Library faculty from submissions from the university and the general public. This year, we focus on one of the most frequently nominated books

during that celebration, Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women. Beginning March 6, the Special Collections Division will open an exhibit entitled “Louisa May Alcott and Her Circle,” which will deal with Alcott and her influence as one of the most popular authors of books for young women.

On March 12, Dr. Hephzibah Roskelly, Associate Professor of English, will lead a discussion on why women love the book Little Women. Dr. Roskelly notes that among women, Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women is one of the most popular books ever published. It has never been out of print since it was first published in 1869. At least four major movies have been made based on it, and there have been many dolls and other collectibles based on the characters in the book.

Because of a desire to make the program convenient for community participants, especially young women and their mothers and grandmothers, we are holding the event on Sunday afternoon, March 12 at 3:00 p.m. in the Virginia Dare Room at the Alumni House. The program will be free, with a reception following. Persons interested in attending or obtaining more information are invited to call Barry Miller at 334-3741.

Readers sometimes ask for assistance in choosing books for leisure reading. Among our suggestions are the following websites:

Featured New Books in Jackson Library : <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/acq/featured/>

Bookbrowser: The site for avid readers: <http://www.bookbrowser.com/>

Novelist, a reader’s advisory service: <http://novelist.carl.org/nlweb.html>

Fiction-L Lists of lists from reader advisory librarians offered by Morton Grove Public Library in Illinois: <http://www.webrary.org/rs/FLbklistmenu.html>

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UNC Greensboro  
P. O. Box 26175  
Greensboro, NC 27402-6175

## Upcoming Events

February 23, 2000 – Faculty Book Authors Reception, featuring authors from the History Department. Hosted by UNCG Book Store and Friends of the Library  
Special Collections Division, Jackson Library 2nd Floor, 4 p.m.

March 6-April 14, 2000 “Louisa May Alcott and Her Circle” exhibit  
Special Collections Division, Jackson Library 2nd Floor, Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

March 12, 2000 “Why Do Women Love Little Women?” public discussion led by Dr. Hephzibah Roskelly in honor of Women’s History Month, Sponsored by Friends of the Library  
Alumni House, 3 p.m.

March 22, 2000 Friends of the Library Annual Dinner, with Lee Smith  
Cone Ballroom, Elliott University Center, Reception begins at 6:15 p.m. with dinner following at 7:15

For more information contact Barry Miller, Special Projects Librarian at 334-3741 or by email at [barry\\_miller@uncg.edu](mailto:barry_miller@uncg.edu)